AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

By this Response, Applicant is amending Claims 8–12, 14–17, 25–30 and 32–35 and is cancelling Claims 1–7, 13, 18–24 and 31 without prejudice or disclaimer.

1.–7. (Canceled).

8. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 1, comprising~~ A method for dynamically allocating control of a storage device, the method comprising:

receiving an access request from a client computer requesting access to a storage device;

directing, based upon the access request, a first computer to assume an inactive state with respect to control of the storage device;

directing, based upon the access request, a second computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device; and

generating storage path data indicating a network path to the storage device.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein generating storage path data comprises generating storage path data at the second ~~storage controller~~ computer.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, comprising communicating the storage path data to a ~~storage manager~~ third computer configured to perform said directing the first computer and said directing the second computer.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, comprising communicating the storage path data to the ~~first~~ client computer.

12. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 1, comprising~~ A method for dynamically allocating control of a storage device, the method comprising:

receiving an access request from a client computer requesting access to a storage device;

directing, based upon the access request, a first computer to assume an inactive state with respect to control of the storage device;

directing, based upon the access request, a second computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device; and

allocating control of the storage device based on the priority of a storage operation.

13. (Canceled).

14. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 13~~ A method for dynamically allocating control of a storage device, the method comprising:

receiving an access request from a client computer requesting access to a storage device;

directing, based upon the access request, a first computer to assume an inactive state with respect to control of the storage device;

directing, based upon the access request, a second computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device; and

storing, in a database, control data indicating a change in control of the storage device, wherein storing control data in a database comprises storing control data in a ~~storage controller computer~~ database of at least one of the first and second computers.

15. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 13~~ A method for dynamically allocating control of a storage device, the method comprising:

receiving an access request from a client computer requesting access to a storage device;

directing, based upon the access request, a first computer to assume an inactive state with respect to control of the storage device;

directing, based upon the access request, a second computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device; and

storing, in a database, control data indicating a change in control of the storage device, wherein storing control data in a database comprises storing control data in a ~~storage manager computer~~ database of a third computer configured to perform said directing the first computer and said directing the second computer.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 13, comprising~~ A method for dynamically allocating control of a storage device, the method comprising:

receiving an access request from a client computer requesting access to a storage device;

directing, based upon the access request, a first computer to assume an inactive state with respect to control of the storage device;

directing, based upon the access request, a second computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device;

storing, in a database, control data indicating a change in control of the storage device; and

identifying, based upon the control data, whether the first computer or second ~~storage controller~~ computer is available to perform a storage operation.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16, comprising directing, based upon the availability of the first computer or second ~~controller~~ computer, a third ~~storage controller~~ computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device.

18.–24. (Canceled).

25. (Currently Amended) ~~The system of claim 18~~ A system for dynamically allocating control of a storage device, the system comprising:

a storage device;

a first computer configured to direct storage operations performed by the storage device;

a second computer configured to direct storage operations performed by the storage device; and

a third computer configured, based upon an access request from a client computer requesting access to the storage device, to direct the first computer to assume an inactive state with respect to control of the storage device and to direct the second computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device, wherein the ~~storage controller~~ first and second computers

are programmed to generate storage path data indicating a network path to the storage device.

26. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 25, wherein the ~~storage controller~~ first and second computers are programmed to communicate the storage path data to the ~~storage manager~~ third computer.

27. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 25, wherein the ~~storage controller~~ first and second computers are programmed to communicate the storage path data to the ~~first~~ client computer.

28. (Currently Amended) ~~The system of claim 18~~ A system for dynamically allocating control of a storage device, the system comprising:

a storage device;

a first computer configured to direct storage operations performed by the storage device;

a second computer configured to direct storage operations performed by the storage device; and

a third computer configured, based upon an access request from a client computer requesting access to the storage device, to direct the first computer to assume an inactive state with respect to control of the storage device and to direct the second computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device, wherein the ~~storage manager~~ third computer is programmed to generate storage path data indicating a network path to the storage device.

29. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 28, wherein the ~~storage manager~~ third computer is programmed to communicate the storage path data to the ~~first~~ client computer.

30. (Currently Amended) ~~The system of claim 18~~ A system for dynamically allocating control of a storage device, the system comprising:

a storage device;

a first computer configured to direct storage operations performed by the storage device;

a second computer configured to direct storage operations performed by the storage device; and

a third computer configured, based upon an access request from a client computer requesting access to the storage device, to direct the first computer to assume an inactive state with respect to control of the storage device and to direct the second computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device, wherein ~~the storage controller~~ each of the first and second computers is programmed to allocate control of the storage device based on the priority of a storage operation.

31. (Canceled).

32. (Currently Amended) ~~The system of claim 31~~ A system for dynamically allocating control of a storage device, the system comprising:

a storage device;

a first computer configured to direct storage operations performed by the storage device;

a second computer configured to direct storage operations performed by the storage device;

a third computer configured, based upon an access request from a client computer requesting access to the storage device, to direct the first computer to assume an inactive state with respect to control of the storage device and to direct the second computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device; and

a database for storing control data indicating a change in control of the storage device, wherein the database comprises a ~~storage controller computer~~ database of at least one of the first and second computers.

33. (Currently Amended) A system for dynamically allocating control of a storage device, the system comprising:

a storage device;

a first computer configured to direct storage operations performed by the storage device;

a second computer configured to direct storage operations performed by the storage device;

a third computer configured, based upon an access request from a client computer requesting access to the storage device, to direct the first computer to assume an inactive state with respect to control of the storage device and to direct the second computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device; and

a database for storing control data indicating a change in control of the storage device, wherein the database comprises a ~~storage manager computer~~ database of the third computer.

34. (Currently Amended) A system for dynamically allocating control of a storage device, the system comprising:

a storage device;

a first computer configured to direct storage operations performed by the storage device;

a second computer configured to direct storage operations performed by the storage device;

a third computer configured, based upon an access request from a client computer requesting access to the storage device, to direct the first computer to assume an inactive state with respect to control of the storage device and to direct the second computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device; and

a database for storing control data indicating a change in control of the storage device, wherein the ~~storage manager~~ third computer is programmed to identify, based upon the control data, whether the first or second ~~storage controller~~ computers is available to perform a storage operation.

35. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 34, wherein, based upon the availability of the first or second computers ~~storage controller~~, the ~~storage manager~~ third computer is programmed to direct a ~~third storage controller~~ fourth computer to assume an active state with respect to control of the storage device.